

C.I.A. Mind Probes Now More Benign

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By JOSEPH B. TREASTER

WASHINGTON — There seemed to be nothing the Central Intelligence Agency had not considered: Lobotomies, powerful drugs, hypnosis, mental telepathy, deprivation of sleep and food, subliminal suggestion, isolation, ultra-sonic sound, flashing stroboscopic lights. The agency even consulted magicians and employed prostitutes.

But nothing gave the agency the formula it sought for creating its own Manchurian candidate. And, last week, under attack again for having violated ethical norms in their psychological experiments, agency officials maintained that they were through tampering with the human mind. They hastened to add, however, that they had not abandoned the aspect of their 25-year exploration into the world of psychiatry that was perhaps the most benign and may have been the only blossom in a rank garden: The construction of elaborate personality profiles of employees in sensitive jobs, potential agents and international military and political figures.

"The work we're doing now does not involve attempts to modify behavior," Admiral Stansfield Turner, the director of the agency, told a Senate hearing last week. "It involves studying it." He said that "the kind of thing we're interested in is what will motivate a man to become an agent of the United States in a very difficult situation. We have to be familiar with the attitudes and responses of people we approach to become our spies."

Intelligence officials call these psychological studies "personality assessment." Potential spies are indeed as-

sessed, but the sweep of the program is much greater than the admiral suggested. The agency has developed "personality assessments" of Fidel Castro and the late Che Guevara, Mao Tse-tung and his successors, the leaders of the Kremlin and the chiefs of state of most of the nations regarded as allies of the United States. "You do it on friends and enemies alike," said one intelligence specialist, "because you can never know when someone's going to switch." When the President of the United States goes to meetings abroad, he is armed with assessments of the officials he will confront, as were members of the United States negotiating team at the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty talks.

At times the assessment program has overstepped the bounds of the agency's charter, which forbids operations directed against Americans inside the United States. The agency ordered a personality study of Daniel Ellsberg when he was awaiting trial for allegedly having given the Pentagon Papers to The New York Times. An assessment was done also of Mr. Ellsberg's lawyer, Leonard Boudin. E. Howard Hunt, a former intelligence agent who was jailed for his part in the Watergate break-in, burglarized the files of Mr. Ellsberg's psychiatrist to get material for the assessment.

A personality assessment is simply a guide to an individual's behavior. It describes his weaknesses and strengths, predicts actions and reactions, and suggests how he can be influenced. The psychologist preparing an assessment for the agency asks: What are the person's principles? His habits? Is he a drinker, a woman-chaser, a reader, a jogger, a hockey fan, a chess player, a chain-smoker, a dog lover, a Sunday morning gardener? Who are his friends? Where is he from? Who was his father?

Usually the psychologist is unable to interview the subject. So he works with photographs and reports provided by agents and other Government employees and informants, published materials, and official records. Whenever possible the psychologist likes to have a tape-recording of his subject's voice to analyze.

Personality assessment in one form or another is as old as the intelligence profession. But it received increased emphasis in the early 1950's from Allen W. Dulles, then the director of the agency. Mr. Dulles had sought neurological treatment for his son, who had been seriously injured in Korea. He went to see Dr. Harold G. Wolfe, a New York neurologist. Mr. Dulles became interested in research Dr. Wolfe was doing on indoctrination by the Chinese of American pilots captured during the Korean War. Before

long, Dr. Wolfe, at the behest of the agency, had set up the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology at the Cornell Medical Center in New York. The society became an important mechanism for funding a number of agency studies directed at manipulating human behavior.

The Department of Sociology at Rutgers University was paid to conduct a study of Hungarian refugees. Dr. D. Ewen Cameron of McGill University in Montreal got a grant to explore "the effects of repeated verbal signals upon human behavior." There was an LSD experiment conducted by a team of social and medical scientists at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center in Boston. The Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N.J., which conducts the National College Board and Graduate Record Examinations, received funds to investigate the relationship between two broad

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theories of personality.

When the society was disbanded in 1965, Col. James L. Monroe, a psychologist who had been a senior intelligence official, and several others joined another agency-backed organization called "Psychological Assessments Inc." After Psychological Assessments closed its doors a few years ago, Colonel Monroe moved to Texas and set up a firm that prepared studies for business and industry. The colonel said recently that he hoped the agency had benefited from some of his research. "If they're going to make judgments about foreign powers," he said, "they've got to know about how people function."

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